

FMST 450/2 fall 1998

FILM STUDIES SPECIALIZATION SEMINAR

Seminar A Monday 13:15-17:15 FB250 Instructor: T. Waugh

Off: FB 315-5, 1250 Guy St. Telephone 848-4654.

Hours: Tuesdays and Fridays 14:00-16:00.

Appointments are strongly recommended since office hours are often pre-empted by department meetings, etc.: call Cinema at 848-4666 (FB 319) for appointments during office hours, or make special arrangements with instructor.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this seminar is to bring together as a learning community students in the Specialization in Film Studies. We will attempt to learn collectively and interactively about the changing nature of the Film Studies field, and to gain practical contact and experience within Film Studies institutions and professional milieus. Our planned activities include workshops in film reviewing, publication, preservation, grantwriting, and research methodology, as well as field trips to major institutions of film culture in the region. Regardless of whether or not you are planning a career or higher study in Film Studies or a related field, the seminar aims to be a resource in your educational and career planning, and to provide skills, knowledge and an esprit de corps that will help lay the groundwork for your future after graduation.

Texts

There are no required texts. The following text is *recommended* as a basic summary: Timothy Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing About Film*, Second edition (New York: Harper Collins, 1994). Available in the University Bookstore, McConnell Building.

A special reading and screening requirement is assigned for Week 6: see below.

Seminar Outline

1. Mon Sept 14 Introductions;
 the syllabus;
 course requirements;
 screening exercise.

2. Mon Sept 21 **Special Topic "Theory and Practice":**

Guests, Concordia Film Studies graduates:

Patricia Kearns, independent filmmaker/National Film Board. *Choir Girls* (16mm, 1998), 52 min

Jean-Claude Marineau, Telefilm Canada: production, funding agencies

Claude Ouellet, Cinéma Libre: distribution

Julie Huguet, NFB: publicity and marketing

-----Sept 24 to Oct 4: Festival "Image et Nation"-----

3. Mon Sept 28 a) Career Planning and Advanced Study; Current state of the discipline

Guests: Prof. Chantal Nadeau, Communication Studies, Concordia

Mario Falsetto, Concordia Film Studies;

Peter Rist, Concordia Film Studies;

Martin Lefebvre, Concordia Film Studies.

- b) Grantwriting workshop, preliminary discussion.

4. Mon Oct 5 a) Grantwriting Workshop;

b) Critical Writing Workshop, preliminary discussion. Guest:
Joanne Larue, *Sequences*, Concordia Film Studies.

-----Oct 12: No Class, Thanksgiving Monday-----

-----Oct 15 to 25 Festival du nouveau cinéma et des nouveaux médias-----

5. Mon Oct 19 **Conservation, Exhibition, the Museum**
Montreal Field Trip: Cinémathèque québécoise

6. Mon Oct 26 **Film Research Methodologies I: Interviewing.**

Guest: Carole Zucker, Concordia Film Studies.

Assignment: Read an interview from Dr. Zucker's forthcoming collection of interviews with British and Irish actors (choose Miranda Richardson, Nigel Hawthorne, or Stephen Rea), as well as the introduction from her previous book *Figures of Light*, all on reserve at Webster. In conjunction with this, screen one of the films discussed in interview you have selected, *The Madness of King George*, *Tom and Viv*, or *The Crying Game*, available at IIT.

7. Mon Nov 2 Special Topic: choice according to group priorities.
Suggested topic: "Teaching Film in the Classroom".

-----Cine-Mania: Nov 5 to 15-----

8. Mon Nov 9 Conservation II
Ottawa Field Trip: National AudioVisual Archives. Host Bill O'Farrell.
Departure 8 am.

9. Mon Nov 16 Critical Writing Workshop
Guests: Joanne Larue, *Séquences*;
Matthew Hays, *The Mirror*;
Dimitri Katadotis, *Hour*
Martin Bilodeau, *Le devoir*

10. Mon Nov 23 Periodical Publishing Workshop:
Guests: André Lavoie, *Ciné-bulles*
Lucinda Chodan, *The Gazette*
Richard Martineau, *Voir* (to be confirmed)

11. Mon Nov 30 "New Technologies and New Formats in Film Research/Analysis."
Guest: Oksana Dykyj, Visual Media Resources. NB: seminar will meet in H341.

-----Dec 2 to 6: Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal-----

12. Mon Dec 7 Workshop: Festivals and Programming.
Guests to be confirmed: representatives of "Image et nation" and other
local festivals.

13. Tuesday Dec 8 Makeup Class a) Interviewing presentations;
b) synthesis

Course Requirements

Note on language: The medium of instruction for the seminar is English. However, written and oral assignments may be offered in either official language.

Note on expenses: Students are expected to bear the costs of field trips, materials and supplies for their presentations (transparencies, photocopying, telephone, cassettes), and the assigned external screening.

1. Attendance and Participation The main substance of the seminar is located in seminar meetings and field trips. Very few readings are assigned and assignments consist of brief workshop exercises and a brief oral report. For this reason, full attendance and participation are obligatory, and the following terms apply:

- credit cannot be given for the seminar if more than two seminar meetings are missed, except on documented medical or other compassionate grounds.
- extended medical absence must be made up (in consultation with instructor).
- the instructor must be informed in advance in writing in the event of absence due to religious observance.
- all workshop exercises and assignments must be completed on time in order to receive credit for the course.
- the seminar begins promptly at 13:15—latecomers are disruptive and cannot be accommodated because of the layout of the room.

No grade is assigned for attendance and participation. However, borderline grades can be inflected up or down by the instructor's estimation of participation.

2. Workshop Exercises

a) **Interview.** In teams of two, choose a local film person as a subject for an interview. Share your selected topic with the group on October 26, along with ideas and plans for the interview.

Preparation for Oct. 26: bring 15 copies of a single page which lists

- a) a profile of your chosen subject
- b) your pre-interview research plans (screenings? readings?) and
- c) a preliminary interview outline including a few sample questions.

Pre-interview research should include basic readings and screenings pertaining to the subject's career. Interviews are to be audio or video recorded, and you will present an excerpt together with a brief report to the group on December 8. You must also present a ONE-PAGE bibliography / filmography of your preparatory research to the instructor on December 8 before you proceed with the report. If you wish, interviews may be deposited with the department as a research bank for future student use. Maximum length of excerpt/report: 15 min.

Worth: 25% of seminar grade.

b) **Film review.** A current film will be assigned in mid-October for viewing outside of class. You will write a professional review of the film as if intended for the readership of the local cultural weeklies (*Mirror, Voir, Hour*: youthful, non-specialist but well educated and socially conscious, avid cultural consumers). See Corrigan, 1-32, if you would like help getting started. You will bring 6 copies of your typed, double-spaced review to the seminar on Nov. 16, and we will critique each other's work and conduct a workshop on the nature and purpose of reviewing. Maximum length: 750 words (3 pages).

Worth: 25% of seminar grade.

c) **Grantwriting.** Students will make two real or imaginary applications to funding agencies as a learning exercise, due Oct. 5. After we collectively discuss the nature and purpose of higher studies in our discipline, two completed forms from each student will be circulated and evaluated by the entire group during the Oct. 5 seminar. In this exercise we will critique each other's real or imaginary research plans and discuss approaches to "grantwriting" and further study.

1. FCAR: Eligible graduating students intending to advance to M.A.-level study usually apply for this Quebec provincial funding (deadline October 7).

2. Canada Council: although this funding body focuses most on creative activity, there is some support for programming and writing about film as well. Students will complete an application for a film studies-oriented project, whether curatorial or critical.

Worth: 10% of seminar grade.

d) **Programming.** To prepare for the programming workshop of December 7. prepare a one-page report on four of the following five Montreal festivals:

- the Montreal World Film Festival. August;
- Image & Nation. Sept 24 to Oct 4;
- Festival du nouveau cinéma et des nouveaux médias. Oct 15 to 25;
- Cine-Mania Nov 5 to 15;
- Rencontres internationales du documentaire, Dec 2 to 6.

You must attend at least one event from each of four festivals selected.

Your report should include

- a) a brief summary of what you understand to be the mission of the festival
- b) one-sentence assessments of the event you attended (please specify), of the festival catalogue and of the festival's overall success in fulfilling its mission, and lastly
- c) a question based on these comments for the festival representative who may be attending the seminar.

Catalogues will be placed on reserve as soon as available.

Due: Dec 7. Worth: 15%

3. Periodical Report

Each student will present an oral "periodical report" during a seminar meeting. Normally a maximum of two periodical reports will be presented at each meeting. Each student will pick one Canadian periodical or broadcast programme from the following list of specialized film magazines, and cultural magazines and newspapers and programmes with important film coverage. The periodicals and programmes are available first come first serve.

Present a report of no longer than 15 minutes on the magazine. The report has three objectives:

- a) to summarize basic data about the magazine, including its history, readership and circulation, financing, and cultural goals;
- b) to analyze its content, "look" and underlying discourses, its success relative to its goals and and its impact in its market; and
- c) to look at the magazine from the writer's point of view (How and why does one write for the magazine?).

Research for the report must include the examination of a minimum of four recent copies (except in the case of new periodicals), and an interview with a cultural editor, publisher or principal film reviewer. The presentation must include visual materials in the form of slides or transparencies, to illustrate your points about content, design and cover policy, as well as a one-page handout to all seminar members, summarizing your findings in point form. If you choose a report on broadcast cultural reporting, focusing on a particular TV or radio programme, an audio or video recording of a brief typical excerpt will be played. Another possibility is to select a website of film criticism on the internet in consultation with the instructor.

Maximum duration: 15 minutes.

Worth: 25% of the seminar grade.

Summary of important dates and grading proportions

Periodical reports: individual dates to be determined	25%
Oct. 5: submit FCAR and Can Council applications	10%
Oct. 26: present interview proposal in class	
Nov. 16: submit film review	25%
Dec. 7: submit festival reports	15%
Dec. 8: final interview presentation	25%

CANADIAN FILM AND CULTURAL PERIODICALS

Borderlines: Canada's Magazine of Cultural Studies (Toronto)
Canadian Forum (Toronto)
Canadian Journal of Film Studies (Ottawa)
Cinéaction! (Toronto)
Ciné-bulles (Montreal)
Cinémas (Montreal)
Le devoir (Montreal)
Fuse (Toronto)
The Gazette (Montreal)
The Globe and Mail (Toronto)
Hour or Mirror (Montreal)
Lundi (Montreal)
Macleans or *Actualité*
Parachute (Montreal)
Point of View (Canadian Independent Film Caucus, Toronto)
La presse or *Le devoir* (Montreal)
Séquences (Montreal)
Spirale (Montreal)
Take One (Toronto)
TV Hebdo. Echo-védettes or some similar star mag
Vingt-quatre images (Montreal)
Voir (Montreal)
Broadcast reviewing: CBC AM; Radio-Canada AM; Newsworld "On the Arts";
Radio-Canada TV, etc.